



DGS Employee Nationally Recognized for Leadership in Laboratory Operations of Virginia's Newborn Screening Program

Wanda "Willie" Andrews, Director of Laboratory Operations in the Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services in the Department of General Services, was recently awarded the Gold Standard Award for Public Health Laboratory Excellence by the National Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL).

Ms. Andrews received the national Gold Standard Award for Public Health Laboratory Excellence because of her leadership and direction of Virginia's Newborn Screening Program. The award is given to an individual or laboratory who makes or has made significant contributions to the technical advancement of public health laboratory science and/or practice.

Virginia's Newborn Screening Program, under the laboratory direction of Ms. Andrews, has introduced many new technologies reducing test result delivery times from days to hours and increasing, from 4 to 28, the number of different diseases that can be identified rapidly in infants ensuring prompt and effective diagnosis and treatment. As a result of her achievements in the science of newborn screening the quality of life has improved for nearly three million infants and their families across the Commonwealth.

The APHL nationally represents and supports governmental laboratories by strengthening programs and policies to provide public health laboratories with the resources and infrastructure needed to protect the health of U.S. residents and to prevent and control diseases globally.

The Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services Newborn Screening Laboratory partners with the Virginia Department of Health to ensure infants born with any of the 28 disorders screened for in Virginia are rapidly identified and treated. Rapid identification and treatment can prevent delayed growth and development, reoccurring infections, blindness, mental retardation and possibly death.